WOMEN NEWS

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ASSISTANCE TO NATIONAL MACHINERY

There have been many recommendations for the United Nations system to extend assistance to national machinery upon request. The most recent of these recommendations are contained in draft resolution XIII of the Commission on the Status of Women entitled "Recommendations and conclusions arising from the first review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000". This draft resolution was recommended by the Commission at its thirty-fourth session for adoption by the Economic and Social Council. Examples of how the structure and strategies of national machinery have been strengthened are the projects in the Congo and Djibouti, which have received funding by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and expertise by the Division for the Advancement of Women.

DJIBOUTI PLANS INCREASED INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

Within the framework of a UNDP project to strengthen the administrative structure of the National Union of Women in Djibouti, advisory assistance is also being provided by the Division.

The National Union of Women is a mass organization that was established in 1977, when Djibouti acquired independence. The hierarchical structure comprises a president, a supreme committee and an executive committee, which consists of a secretary-general, deputy secretary-general and the heads of the five commissions in the priority areas established, namely, literacy, health, income-generating activities, technology and strengthening the organization. Never having had a fixed budget, the Union has always relied on various funding sources and, with international and bilateral assistance, has managed to produce results in all five activity areas. However, the operating difficulties have become increasingly more apparent over the years. The Union consequently requested assistance in looking for a solution in order to revitalize the organization, make it more visible, and thereby upgrade it to a position of increased influence in order to achieve greater integration of women in development.

Proposals have been made to include the Union in a ministerial-level review of the national plan and of each of the sectors in which the Union is active to ensure future co-ordination. At the same time, the Union could explore the possibility of restructuring itself to coincide with the sectoral ministries, and focal points for women should be established in each of the ministries. Such co-ordination and centralization planning would avoid marginalizing women's activities and ensure their integration into national development as a whole. In order to implement these proposals, assistance will be required from international as well as bilateral agencies to restructure the Union and offer appropriate training, and to relaunch activities which have lost their impetus over the years.

CONGO ESTABLISHES DIVISION FOR INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

With the assistance of UNDP and the Division for the Advancement of Women, a national strategy for the integration of women in development and a design and implementation plan for creating the Division for Integration of Women in Development in the Congo's Ministry of Planning and Economy were prepared. This Division, which will collaborate closely with the Union des femmes révolutionnaires du Congo, has been located in the Ministry of Planning and Economy rather than in a sectoral ministry and officials responsible for women in development have been designated in the other ministries.

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Through the envisaged system, all international assistance can be rationalized, as the Division will provide UNDP with details of all types of assistance needed and, instead of each ministry having separate discussions with donors, the Division will deal with a round table of donors co-ordinated by UNDP.

The Division's approach to the integration and advancement of women is development-oriented and therefore focuses, not on the elimination of discrimination, but on the development of women as an essential human resource whose advancement is to the benefit of all of society. In order to avoid marginalization, projects will therefore not be specifically oriented towards women. Emphasis is being placed on technical training and education of the upcoming generation of young women in order to empower them to increase their productivity. It also implies giving women other prerequisites, such as support services, in order to perform efficiently. By such an approach, the role of the Division is to assist the sectoral ministries in achieving their objectives through better utilization of human resources.

COMMUNICATIONS CONCERNING THE STATUS OF WOMEN

The consideration of communications concerning the status of women has been on the agenda of the Commission on the Status of Women since its inception. Economic and Social Council resolution 76 (V) of 5 August 1947, as amended by resolutions 304 (XI) I of 14 and 17 July 1950, forms the basis for the Commission's mandate to receive at each of its regular sessions confidential and non-confidential lists of communications relating to the status of women, which concern women's rights in the political, economic, civil, social, educational and other fields. Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/27 of 26 May 1983 authorized the Commission to appoint a working group, consisting of not more than five of its members, to meet in closed meetings during each session of the Commission in order to consider all communications and prepare a report.

The confidential and non-confidential lists contain summaries of written communications received by the Division for the Advancement of Women alleging violations of human rights specifically related to the status of women. After the processing of a confidential communication, a copy is sent to the permanent representative to the United Nations of the country concerned, so as to give the Government an opportunity to furnish a reply. The lists containing the summaries, as well as the Government replies, if any, are submitted confidentially to the members of the Commission on the Status of Women.

At its thirty-fourth session, the Commission adopted a draft resolution by which the Economic and Social Council would recognize that the mandate of the Commission to consider communications on the status of women was crucial to its central role in monitoring and formulating recommendations furthering the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. The Council would also request the Secretary-General, in consultation with Governments, to examine the existing mechanisms for communications on the status of women.

2,000 documents in WIS

The Women's Information System (WIS) computerized bibliographic data bank operated by the Division for the Advancement of Women recently reached 2,000 records of documents and papers produced by the United Nations system on women's issues since January 1985.

The primary objective of the system is to provide bibliographic information on the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. Searches have recently been undertaken on the subjects covered by the priority themes for 1991 of the Commission on the Status of Women: national machinery; vulnerable women: single-parent families, aging, youth, disabled women; and refugees. Print-outs of these and other searches are available upon request from WIS, Division for the Advancement of Women, Vienna International Centre, P.O. Box 500, A-1400 Vienna, Austria.

INSTRAW celebrates tenth anniversary

The United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) celebrated 10 years of its existence on16 February 1990. INSTRAW, which is located in the Dominican Republic, is an autonomous institution within the United Nations system, funded entirely by voluntary contributions. It was established by the General Assembly to carry out research, training and information activities world-wide to promote women as key agents of development. The policy-making organ, the Board of Trustees, consists of 11 members nominated by Member States and appointed by the Economic and Social Council to serve in their personal capacity for a three-year term, and 8 ex-officio members.

In his message to INSTRAW on its tenth anniversary, the Secretary-General of the United Nations said: "May that occasion inspire all of us in the efforts of the United Nations to bring women to their full and rightful place in the world's work and to better standards of life in larger freedom".

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

A meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of the Whole for the Preparation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, held in New York, was addressed by the Deputy Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women on 21 March 1990.

The main points brought to the attention of the Committee were that the social and economic implications of inequality between men and women were inseparable; that development policies were not gender-neutral in effect and should not be considered so when being planned; and that women were an economic factor not to be ignored, as successful development could not be achieved without their full integration.

It was pointed out that women were of equal importance to men in global production statistics, constituting a sizeable and growing proportion of the total industrial labour force; having a critical, even if unrecognized, role in agriculture; being prominent in the informal sector; doing the majority of the world's domestic work, unvalued and unpaid labour that enabled economies to continue to function efficiently; as well as bearing, often alone, the major burden of managing the home and providing emotional and physical support for family members. It was suggested that, while targeted investment in the education and training of women would eliminate inequalities and later have its effect on the participation of women in the labour force both in terms of quantity and quality, policies should also be directed towards those women already in the labour force. Various steps to enable women to recover from past inequities should be considered: on the one hand, providing literacy programmes, vocational training and targeted agricultural extension; and on the other, making economic tools such as credit, land and technology available to them. Additionally, women should be included in the decision-making process.

Women constituted approximately 10 per cent of the membership of the *Ad Hoc* Committee, a little below average for such intergovernmental groups. However, during the debate, in the context of human resource management, a number of representatives noted the importance of incorporating the advancement of women in a new international development strategy.

MIGRANT WOMEN

An expert group meeting on international migration policies and the status of female migrants was held at San Miniato, Italy, from 27 to 30 March 1990, under the auspices of the United Nations Population Division. While many of the group's final recommendations concerned migrants in general, the point was stressed throughout the meeting that women must be seen as part of the whole picture and not neglected, especially since they, as migrants and women, are often subject to overt or covert discrimination; and efforts should be made to ensure their fair and equal treatment. Recommendations specifically concerning women called upon Governments to undertake the following measures: to review their migration policies and legislation in order to avoid discriminatory practices; and to take appropriate steps to provide adequate support for elderly women and protect the rights of vulnerable groups of migrant women, such as those in domestic service, those engaged in out-work, those who find themselves involved in prostitution and mail-order brides. Legal advice should be available in receiving countries, especially in regard to the acquisition and maintenance of legal status, marriage and divorce, domestic violence, labour laws, legislation on sex discrimination, and welfare and other social-service entitlements, including family planning. Migrant women should have equal access to training programmes for employment and entry into the labour force, and measures should be taken to ensure that training in the language of the host country is available and accessible to them. Furthermore, the creation of associations for and by migrant women should be facilitated to promote the dissemination of information, and to provide counselling and social services. It was also recommended that in organizing campaigns to regularize undocumented migrants, Governments should take measures to ensure that female migrants in an irregular situation have the same opportunities as male migrants to qualify for regularization.

CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN UPDATE OF STATUS REPORT

Since the publication of *Women News* No. 33, which included details of the status of signatures and ratifications of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women at 1 December 1989, the following additions have been recorded, bringing the number of States parties to 101 at 30 March 1990:

Ratifications

Chile	7 December 1989
Trinidad and Tobago	12 January 1990

Signature

Belize	7 March 1990

UNITED NATIONS PUBLICATIONS ON WOMEN

Free publications	Language*	Available from
Women News (8 issues per year)	E/F/S	Division for the Advancement of Women P.O. Box 500 A-1400 Vienna Austria
Women 2000 (3 issues per year)	E/F/S	
Data Highlights (16 issues - 1988-1991)	E/F/S	
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	A/C/E/F/R/S	
Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (DPI/926-09859)	A/C/E/F/R/S	
Sales publications		
1989 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development (Sales No. E.89.IV.2)	A/C/E/F/R/S	United Nations Sales Section Palais des Nations 1211 Geneva 10 Switzerland OR United Nations Sales Section United Nations Headquarters New York, NY 10017 United States of America
The Work of CEDAW/Volume I, 1982-1985 (Sales No. E.89.IV.4)	E**	
Violence against Women in the Family (Sales No. E.89.IV.5)	E**	
Participation of Women in Decision-making for Peace: Case Study on Sweden (Sales No. E.89.IV.7)	E**	
Information kit		
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	E/F/S	Department of Public Information United Nations Headquarters New York, NY 10017 United States of America
JUNIC/NGO Kits		
No. 1 Women and Disability (1981)	E**	United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service Palais des Nations 1211 Geneva 10 Switzerland
No. 2 Women, Health and Development (1982)	E**	
No. 3 Key to Development: Women's Role in Economic and Social Development (1984)	E	
No. 4 Women and Shelter (1987)	E/F/S	
No. 5 Women and Peace (1989)	E/F/S	
No. 6 Women and the Economic Crisis (1990)	E/F/S	

*Language symbols: A = Arabic; C = Chinese; E = English; F = French; R = Russian; S = Spanish.

**Will also appear in French and Spanish in the near future.

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